



MOVING OUT

FACILITATOR GUIDE

SESSION OVERVIEW

These two interactive lesson plans provide graduating high school students with introductory information about moving away from home. Due to the size and diversity of this topic, one 45-minute lesson lays the foundation for living independently, while the subsequent 45-minute lesson adds complexity and reality to the basics of Moving Out. Lesson one covers choices such as accommodation, roommates, transportation, furnishing and budgeting. Lesson two is designed to expose students to real life scenarios and some of the possible challenges they may face upon moving out. Students will need one to two weeks between sessions to prepare their budgets.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Lesson One – Moving Out Basics

1. Students will gain an understanding about the many issues involved with moving out.
2. Students will plan start up costs and prepare a monthly budget.

Lesson Two – Moving Out Challenges and Realities

3. Students will be challenged to problem-solve “real life” scenarios experienced when setting up independent living arrangements.
4. Students will gain information about the Residential Tenancies Act.
5. Students will explore personal safety measures related to their rental accommodation and social activities.

MATERIALS

Hand Out 1 – Moving Out

Budgeting Basics, optional resource from Credit Counseling Services of Alberta

Money 101, optional resource from Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry

Classified advertisements and flyers from newspapers



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OVERVIEW AND TIMELINES – Lesson One

Introduction – Moving Out is a State of Mind	5 Minutes
Moving Out: What do You Need to Know?	15 Minutes
Choosing Your Place	5 Minutes
Stocking Up – Groceries and Furnishings	5 Minutes
Calculate Your Start Up Costs	10 Minutes
Pulling it all Together! Setting a Budget Assignment	5 Minutes

OVERVIEW AND TIMELINES – Lesson Two

Introduction – How Did the Budget Setting Go?	10 Minutes
Scenarios – Now What Do We Do?	10 Minutes
Landlord and Tenant Relations	10 Minutes
Safety – Need to Know Stuff	10 Minutes
Wrap Up – Living on Less	5 Minutes

ACTIVITIES – Lesson One

INTRODUCTION – MOVING OUT IS A STATE OF MIND

Distribute **Moving Out Hand Out**.

Question the group on who is planning on moving out after high school and on some of the reasons for moving out. Often students move out to attend a post-secondary program or to enter the labour force.

Briefly discuss the pros and cons of moving out. Brainstorm a “pros & cons” list with the group and document ideas on the board. Emphasize the issue of responsibility; encourage students to recognize this both as a pro and as a con.

Moving out is a state of mind; it’s about our taking full responsibility and making decisions anywhere and all of the time. Students can start doing this without having to leave their own room! Survey the group for areas of responsibility they will take on when they move out. What responsibilities do they have now?



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MOVING OUT: WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

Refer students to pages 2 and 3 in the **Moving Out Hand Out**. A number of decisions will need to be made when students leave home, based upon their different situations, resources, needs and goals. Ask students to think about a possible scenario for their first year out of high school. This could be post-secondary education, working, starting a small business, volunteering or travelling. Working in pairs, ask student teams to focus on two challenges arising from pages 2 and 3 of the hand out. **How will they decide about these issues?** Have students jot down thoughts and ideas for making key decisions. Ask each student team to provide ideas / feedback from their discussions.

Top Up List For Facilitators

<p>Reasons for a roommate: Save money, security in numbers, share resources.</p> <p>Things to consider: How do you pick a roommate? Best friend or acquaintance? House rules Times friends can be over Smoking... How are costs divided? Consider 3 people living in a 2-bedroom place. Who cleans the place and when? Who pays the bills?</p> <p>Accommodation: Rent, damage deposit... How is rent divided? What utilities are included? Cable, Internet costs ... Content insurance ...</p> <p>Transportation: Is public transportation an option? How much is a bus pass? Do you need to buy a vehicle? Is car-pooling an option? How much is parking?</p> <p>Clothing: Do you need clothes for work? Special work attire, such as steel toed boots, or dress clothes? Do you have clothes for all seasons and activities?</p>	<p>Furnishings: What do you already have? What can you get from parents? Grandparents ... Where else can you get household items inexpensively? Second hand stores and garage sales ...</p> <p>Finances: Shop around for the best deal on banking services ... What is the cost of using Interac? What is the cost of using a credit card? What is the interest rate on a loan? Have you looked into scholarships?</p> <p>Food: What does it cost to eat? Are you okay with "no name" brands? Are you going to share food with a roommate? What about toiletries? Cleaning supplies ... How often can you go out to eat or socialize?</p> <p>Entertainment: What are your entertainment costs? Do you buy pop or coffee daily? What about the cost of traveling home on the weekend? Rent videos or go out to movies ... Do you need funds for the gym or sport activities? What about hobbies?</p>
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CHOOSING YOUR PLACE

Ask students to turn to the **Choose Your Place Worksheet** on page 4. Students can use this worksheet to assess future housing options. Discuss the balance between amenities and rent – the more you get, the more you pay. Question the group about what is important to them.

Note to Teachers – Choosing Your Place

As a homework assignment, students may be asked to refer to classified ads to explore rental opportunities in the local marketplace and the value of various amenities. It may be useful to have students bring samples of rental ads to class.

STOCKING UP – GROCERIES AND FURNISHINGS

Refer to **Stocking Up! The Goods on Groceries!** on page 5. Moving away from home probably means stocking up on basic food staples such as the items listed in the hand out. Have students work in pairs or small groups to review a variety of newspaper flyers. Ask them to determine costs for startup items and record them on their hand out. Encourage students to continue their research outside of class by discussing with their parent(s) or by visiting a grocery store.

Refer to **What Household Items Do You Need to Start Up?** on page 6. Ask students to check off each of the items that they would like to have in their home. Brainstorm methods to obtain household items and have students document ideas on their hand out. Strategies might include garage sales, parents/grandparents, thrift stores, classified ads, and constructing your own.

Note to Teachers:

*Make students aware that **Stocking Up! The Goods on Groceries** and **What Household Items Do You Need to Start Up?** are intended to help them know what the costs are to set up a new place and the ongoing food costs. Reinforce that moving out can be expensive and advanced preparation can help to manage these costs. Students can troubleshoot their grocery budgets by considering what items are needs and what items are wants. Consider whether store brand products are okay, or are brand names important?*

CALCULATE YOUR START UP COSTS

Refer the group to **Calculate Your Start Up Costs** on page 7. In addition to setting a budget, students need to be aware of the initial costs of moving out. Ask students what they already have or know they will be able to get for free. Ask students what they know about the costs of utilities, cable, Internet and phone. Encourage students to talk with family and friends to get an accurate idea of what resources are available to them.



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For example, in January 2008, it is \$35 for hooking up a Telus landline phone. For internet and long distance packages it costs between \$60.00 to \$110.00 per month. Some students may choose to use their cell phones, but are they further ahead? Challenge students to find out the real costs by phoning companies and by talking with family and friends!

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER! SETTING A BUDGET ASSIGNMENT

This activity can be introduced as a take home assignment or you may wish to allocate some class time. It is recommended that students work in groups or pairs. Students can be grouped according to their plans following high school, such as attending specific post-secondary institutions or entering the work force. Provide groups with shopping flyers and newspapers to determine the real costs of renting, buying household items and groceries.

Refer students to the **Budget Worksheet**, pages 8 to 11 of the **Moving Out Hand Out**. Have students research what their expenses will be. For some expenses, students will have to make their best guess! For students planning to attend a post-secondary institution, tuition fees can be obtained by using the Alberta Learning Information Service web site at alis.alberta.ca and by following the links to their school of choice. Use local classified ads to confirm accommodation costs. Students can use a combination of grocery store flyers, talking with their parents and visiting grocery stores to determine how much their grocery list would cost. Students may wish to visit department stores and thrift stores to find out what household items cost. Insurance information can be obtained from insurance companies. Students should be given an appropriate amount of time to do this assignment. One or two weeks are recommended.

ACTIVITIES – Lesson Two

INTRODUCTION – HOW DID THE BUDGET SETTING GO?

Have students form the groups or pairs that they have been working with to set a budget. Have students present the totals from the **Calculate Your Start Up Costs** and the **Budget Worksheet** in their hand out. Facilitate discussion about what students found surprising and how they came up with some of their budget totals. What are some of the innovative ways they plan to make their budgets work? Compare budgets and discuss differences between groups.



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SCENARIOS – NOW WHAT DO WE DO?

Distribute one **Moving Out Scenario** (pages 8 – 11) to each group of students.

This activity is designed to introduce budgeting problems that occur in real life. Each group is to brainstorm solutions for their particular scenario and present them to the class. Debrief the presentations and challenge students to be well prepared. Back-up plans may be needed when they move out! Finish with Scenario 8 and then lead a discussion of the Residential Tenancies Act.

LANDLORD AND TENANT RELATIONS

Refer students to the **Landlord and Tenant Relations** information on pages 12 and 13 of the hand out. This is necessary information before renting for the first time. Encourage students to read the tip sheet that can be found at the Alberta government web site: www.gov.ab.ca/gs. Click on Tennants and follow the links to the Tips Sheet. From this web site you can also link to the Landlord and Tenants Advisory Board.

SAFETY – NEED TO KNOW STUFF

Refer students to the **Safety** information on pages 14 and 15 of the **Moving Out Hand Out**. Personal safety is an important topic that youth often minimize until it hits home. Use some real life examples to help students recognize that safety awareness is important for them to know. If time allows, you may want to supplement the discussion of personal safety with some of the following web sites:

http://www.getwebwise.ca/teen_main.cfm - Internet safety

<http://www.deal.org/> - great web site built for youth, covers a range of topics from diversity to violence

www.streetdrugs.org - drug prevention

WRAP UP – LIVING ON LESS

Wrap up the topic of budgeting by discussing “**Living on Less**” on page 11. Have students review the tips that are found at the conclusion of the budgeting worksheet. If time allows, brainstorm additional tips to add to the list.



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Moving Out Scenarios

Scenario 1

Your parents decide to buy a 2-bedroom condo for you to share with your 2 brothers while you are going to college in Red Deer. They expect you and your brothers to cover all expenses except rent while you are in school. One brother has 1 year of college left and the other brother has 3 years of college left. How do you sort out paying for the expenses and food? Who gets a room to themselves? Do they pay more for this privilege? You decide to let your brother who is graduating have a room of his own. Next year will be your turn.

The brother who is graduating in a year is now engaged. His fiancé has moved in, but is not contributing to bills.
What do you do?

Scenario 2

You and a good friend rent an apartment in a walk-up building. The neighborhood is rough, but it is within walking distance to NAIT in Edmonton, where you are attending college. You are working part-time as a waiter/waitress at Boston Pizza. Your roommate is an apprentice electrician in his 1st year. Your budget is tight, but the tips will help.

Someone a floor below you falls asleep while smoking and starts a fire. Everyone gets out of the building alive but all your belongings are badly damaged by smoke. What do you do? In hindsight, would you make any changes to your first budget?



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Scenario 3

You and your roommate find an apartment to rent near to each of your work places. You are able to make your budget even on your starting wages because you can get by without buying a car until you are making more income.

You are injured on the job and have a broken femur (thigh bone). You will be in a cast for 2 months and will need physiotherapy for 6 to 8 weeks. You are now being paid by WCB at 60% of your salary.

What do you do?

Scenario 4

Your best friend (who you were going to share an apartment with in Red Deer) gets offered a job in Calgary and moves. You cannot think of anyone you would like to have as a roommate and decide to advertise for one. You decide to share the apartment with someone who recently moved to Red Deer and is working in the retail industry.

Your new roommate turns out to be very outgoing and often invites friends over after going out. You are okay with this, but begin to notice some of your things are missing. You cannot prove who is taking things but you are sure someone is. What do you do? Do you have any tips for choosing future roommates?



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Scenario 5

You and two friends move out and rent a house together. You are all working and have planned this for the past year. Your place becomes the place to party for your friends on the weekend. You are really enjoying your life!

One of your roommates loses his/her job after phoning in sick at the last minute on three occasions. He does not have any savings and is unable to pay his portion of the bills for the month. Now what?

Scenario 6

You like your space and would like to try to move out on your own. You are working at the hospital in the kitchen and making fairly good money. You find a place to rent near the hospital so you do not have to buy a car. You are planning to go back to school in a couple of years to take something in the health care field, so you would like to save some money for school. You think you can make it work on your own.

Things are going well and you decide to buy a car for \$2000.00. You add car payments, gas and insurance to your budget. After a few weeks your car dies on you and you have to have it towed to a garage. The mechanic tells you the alternator needs to be replaced. He suggests you get the oil changed and informs you that your brakes will need to be replaced soon and that you will need new tires before winter. Now what?

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Scenario 7

You and two friends move from rural Alberta to Red Deer. You move into your apartment August 1 and start a job right away. You enjoy the freedom and the opportunities the city has. Your roommate's parents provided a vehicle to use so you are able to get home on weekends once in a while. In the winter you get an opportunity to work out at NOVA and make a lot more money. Until you receive a few months pay coming in, you can't afford a vehicle. Your roommate agrees to let you use the vehicle his/her parents provided to get to and from work.

Second week on the job, you get into an accident on the way home from work. You are sore and bruised, but okay. The vehicle is written off and now you have no way to get to work. There is only collision insurance on the vehicle. Your friend is angry and insists you replace his vehicle. You will not be allowed to use the vehicle you buy to replace the one that is wrecked to get to work. Now what?

Scenario 8

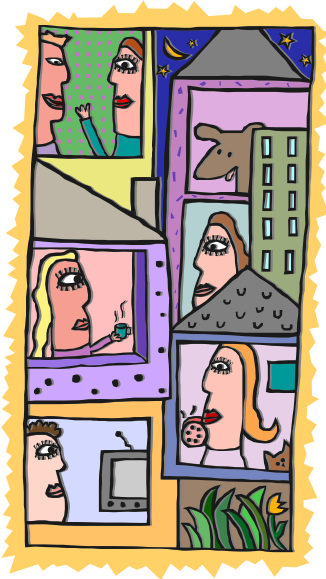
You and a friend from high school rent a house near the university in Lethbridge. You are attending university with the goal of becoming a teacher. You are working part-time to keep down your student loans. Your roommate isn't sure what he/she wants to take and is in a General Arts program. Your roommate is busy on the day you meet with the landlord, so you meet with the landlord, walk through the house and sign the tenancy agreement. You and your roommate plan to move in at the beginning of September. You set up a budget from September to April.

It's now November and you have been roommates for two months. Your roommate has a big party on a Friday night. You have to work the next morning and are not happy getting up after only four hours of sleep. When you get home from work you discover that the rug is badly stained and there is a hole in the wall by the bathroom. You have an argument with your roommate and he/she packs up and leaves. Now what? Who pays for the damages?



Your name: _____

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Hints and tips for living on your own!

Adapted from Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs' "Moving Out", Budgeting – MCC employment development and Canoe Money and Teen Team Cooperative's "Getting Started on Your Own"



Moving Out: What Do You Need To Know?

What is Moving Out?

Moving out is a state of mind. It is not just about living on your own; it's about being responsible for yourself, building a life. It's about solving problems, finding answers, attaining goals and being the person you want to be. The following information is intended to identify things to think about. This information only reaches the surface, so talk to your parents, friends, local RCMP detachment, and community service providers for complete information.

Roommates

You can save money; rent and utilities are half! But who do you want to live with, your best friend, an acquaintance? How are costs divided? What if three people share a two-bedroom place and you have to share a room, do you pay the same as the person who has their own room? What are the house rules?

Your thoughts:

Accommodation

Where do you want to live: apartment, house, or basement suite? How much rent can you afford? What's included in the rent?

Your thoughts:

Transportation

Do you need to own a car? Can you use public transportation? Can you walk to work/school?

Your thoughts: _____

Clothing

Clothes cost! Do you need to buy clothes for work? Do you need clothes for recreation? What about winter clothes?

Your thoughts:



Furnishings

What do you already have? What can you get for free? What do you need?

Your thoughts:

Finances

Shop around for the best deal on banking services. Consider what Interac costs each time you use it. How much extra will you pay in interest if you have to use a credit card?

Your thoughts:

Food

What do you like to eat? What does it cost? Are you okay with buying “yellow labels”?

How often can you go out to eat?

Your thoughts:

Entertainment

What do you like to do? Can you afford new CD's? Are you still going to be able to pay rent and buy food if you go out with friends for food?

Your thoughts:



Choose Your Place Worksheet

Neighborhood

- ☐ Pleasant
- ☐ Safe
- ☐ Quiet
- ☐ Near work or classes
- ☐ Near shopping
- ☐ Near bus lines
- ☐ Bus service during day
- ☐ And during night

Building

- ☐ Secure
- ☐ Good exits
- ☐ Fire extinguishers
- ☐ Clean and well maintained

The Apartment

- ☐ Good plumbing
- ☐ Bath or shower
- ☐ Balcony
- ☐ Appliances clean, working
- ☐ Drapes
- ☐ Dead bolts on doors

Kitchen

- ☐ Stove
- ☐ Fridge
- ☐ Dishwasher

Lighting

- ☐ Enough natural light
- ☐ Enough artificial light

Storage

- ☐ Closets large enough
- ☐ Other storage

Neighbors'

- ☐ Walls soundproof
- ☐ Neighbors pleasant

Laundry

- ☐ Laundry facilities in the unit
- ☐ In the building
- ☐ At what cost
- ☐ Scheduled

Parking

- ☐ Parking included
- ☐ A plug-in
- ☐ Covered

Utilities

- ☐ Who pays
- ☐ Gas
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Power

Before you sign an agreement you should know:

- The amount of rent and if any increases are planned
- What are the consequences if you break the lease in the event of emergency?
- The amount of security deposit as well as potential deductions for typical wear and tear or damages
- Can you hang posters or pictures, and will this damage be deducted from your deposit?
- Which utilities are included with rent and which ones you pay
- Services provided by the landlord e.g. laundry and storage facilities
- Is parking available and at what cost?
- The condition of the premises and whether cleaning and repairs will be completed before possession



Here is a sample of a grocery list; use it to figure out your own costs.

Personal Items

- _____ Shampoo
- _____ Conditioner
- _____ Gel / Mousse
- _____ Hairspray
- _____ Hand / Body Soap
- _____ Body Lotion
- _____ Razors
- _____ Tooth Brush
- _____ Tooth Paste
- _____ Mouth Wash
- _____ Facial Cleanser
- _____ Q-Tips
- _____ Cotton Balls
- _____ Brush
- _____ Comb
- _____ Band Aids
- _____ Cold Medicine
- _____ Pain Medicine
- _____ Shaving Gel
- _____ Medication
- _____ First aid ointment
- _____ Personal Hygiene



What Household Items Do You Need To Start Up?

Kitchen

- _____ Can opener
- _____ Pots
- _____ Pans
- _____ Spatulas
- _____ Tongs
- _____ Colander
- _____ Bowls with lids
- _____ Toaster
- _____ Garbage Can
- _____ Knives
- _____ Glasses
- _____ Plates
- _____ Bowls
- _____ Silverware
- _____ Kettle
- _____ Oven Mitts
- _____ Silverware Organizer
- _____ Dish Rack
- _____ Kitchen Table
- _____ Chairs
- _____ Other

Living Room

- _____ Lamp
- _____ TV Stand
- _____ TV
- _____ VCR / DVD
- _____ Stereo
- _____ Coffee Table
- _____ Chair
- _____ Couch
- _____ Telephone
- _____ C.D. Player
- _____ Other

Bathroom

- _____ Towels
- _____ Face Cloths
- _____ Toilet Brush
- _____ Bath Mat
- _____ Garbage Can
- _____ Plunger

_____ Other

Bedroom

- _____ Bed
- _____ Dresser
- _____ Night Stand
- _____ Bed Sheets
- _____ Comforter
- _____ Pillows
- _____ Extra Blanket
- _____ Alarm Clock
- _____ Lamp
- _____ Hangers
- _____ Other

Miscellaneous

- _____ Clock
- _____ Mirror
- _____ Extension Cord
- _____ Fire Extinguisher
- _____ Scissors
- _____ Tape
- _____ Nails
- _____ Hammer
- _____ Screwdriver / Pliers
- _____ Light bulbs
- _____ Other
- _____ Other



Calculate Your Start Up Costs

Damage Deposit	_____
Rent	_____
Telephone Hook Up	_____
Utilities Hook Up	_____
Internet / Cable Hook Up	_____
Insurance	_____
Grocery Start Up	_____
Furniture Start Up	_____
Miscellaneous Costs	_____
Other	_____
TOTAL:	_____

Now that you have identified your “start up” needs and costs, you need to look at monthly costs. The next step is to build a monthly budget for regular expenses so that you can plan accurately and be prepared.



Budget Worksheet

Just to get a feel for preparing a budget, fill out the following monthly expenses, and compare to monthly income. If you are unable to get the specific cost for each item you would use, “guesstimate”! Later, keep receipts and track an entire month of expenses to get a more accurate picture.

Don’t forget about those annual expenses like vehicle insurance, license renewal and Christmas. It’s best to plan ahead. Calculate the amount of money you will need during the next year for all irregular expenses. Divide the total by 12 and put that amount aside each month so you will be able to meet annual expenses when they come.

Housing Expenses

Rent	\$
Heating, Electricity, Water	\$
Home or tenant insurance	\$
Telephone	\$
TOTAL HOUSING	\$

Groceries

Food	\$
Junk food	\$
Household supplies	\$
TOTAL GROCERIES	\$

Education Costs

Tuition	\$
Student Union fees	\$
Books	\$
Stationery – paper, pens	\$
Recreation fees	\$
TOTAL EDUCATION COST	\$



Health Care

Dental, Eye Care	\$
Prescriptions	\$
Alberta Health Care premiums	\$
Other medical costs	\$
TOTAL HEALTH CARE	\$

Getting Around

License and registration fees	\$
Parking fees	\$
Gasoline	\$
Bus fare	\$
Car payment	\$
Cab fare	\$
Maintenance	\$
Auto insurance	\$
TOTAL GETTING AROUND	\$

Personal Spending

Clothing	\$
Shoes	\$
Haircuts	\$
Cosmetics / personal grooming	\$
Laundry	\$
Alcohol	\$
Cigarettes	\$
Other	\$
TOTAL PERSONAL SPENDING	\$

Banking Fees

Bank charges	\$
Loan payment	\$
Credit card payment	\$
TOTAL BANKING FEES	\$



Having Fun

Restaurants	\$
Movies	\$
Hobbies	\$
Pets	\$
Books / magazines	\$
Cable TV / Internet access	\$
Music	\$
Other	\$
TOTAL FUN	\$

Miscellaneous Costs

Christmas	\$
Travel	\$
Gifts	\$
Vacation	\$
Taxes	\$
Other	
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS COSTS	\$

Add up all the TOTALS

Total Housing	\$
Total Groceries	\$
Total Education	\$
Total Health Care	\$
Total Getting Around	\$
Total Personal Spending	\$
Total Banking Fees	\$
Total Miscellaneous Costs	\$
TOTAL OF ALL TOTALS	\$



Now, let's see what's coming in . . .

Employment income	\$
Loan or grant income	\$
Gifts of money	\$
Government supports (EI, SFI, AISH)	\$
WCB	\$
Tips	\$
Incidental income	\$
TOTAL INCOME	\$

The goal is to have more coming in than going out. If you are short, look for innovative ways to reduce your expenses. How about bartering, bargain shopping or other ways to reduce?

Remember some **“living on less”** tips:

- ✓ Avoid debt at all costs; paying interest is expensive.
- ✓ Shop in bulk! If you live with roommates, pool your money and buy larger amounts for less.
- ✓ Reduce, reuse and recycle!
- ✓ Ask local service providers about community kitchens, or food cooperatives. These services can help maintain healthy eating at minimal costs.
- ✓ Plan in advance and avoid impulse or crisis purchases.
- ✓ Always shop around, even if the price is time sensitive – don't be pressured into purchasing anything.
- ✓ Everything is negotiable; always ask for a lower price or rate!
- ✓ Think about cheap ways to entertain: have potluck dinners, volunteer with local theatre to get free tickets, or go to “cheap” flicks.
- ✓ Remember your priorities; food is always more important than CD's, cigarettes or beer!



Landlord and Tenant Relations

Get informed before setting out to find a place to rent. The Residential Tenancy Act outlines the responsibilities and rights of both landlords and tenants. Read a copy of the Tip Sheet provided from the government of Alberta which can be found at: www.gov.ab.ca/gs

You can also follow the links from this site to the Landlord and Tenant's Advisory Board, another great place to learn about your rights as a tenant. Further information can be obtained by phoning the Landlord and Tenant information service at 1-877-427-4088.

Some Important Tips:

Whoever signs the tenancy agreement is responsible for paying the rent – *that means that if your roommates move out without warning, you may still be on the hook for rent.*

Most places require you to pay a **security deposit** or a **damage deposit**. *This money is held until you move out and is used to make repairs for normal wear and tear. Make sure you know what things need to be done so you can get your security deposit back.*

The landlord and the tenant must do the **Inspection Report** together – *before moving in and after moving out, complete a thorough inspection of the premises with the landlord. You don't want to pay for damage someone else did! Get a copy of the inspection for your own records. The landlord must refer to the inspection in order to deduct from the security deposit.*

You must pay your rent on time; find out what day it is due! *Within 7 days of the inspection report, you must receive a copy. You can refuse to pay your rent until you receive the report.*

You can rent based on a periodic tenancy agreement or a fixed term or lease agreement. *If you are renting on a fixed term, your rent cannot be increased, but you are responsible for the rent for the term of the lease. If you sign a periodic rental agreement your rent can go up, but usually you must be given 3 months notice.*

It is the landlord's responsibility to keep up repairs to the health standards outlined by Alberta's Health Act. *Read your agreement because you might be responsible for some repairs.*



The security deposit must be returned, including interest, to the tenant within ten days from the day the tenant moves out of the premises – *if there are any deductions, the landlord must itemize them in detail.*

Are there any other rules you need to know about like no pets, or no smoking?

Landlords may enter the premises without the tenant agreement if they give 24 hours notice.

You can sublet your place, but only if you have the landlord's permission. *Also, if guests stay past 14 days they can be evicted.*

A landlord is not allowed to discriminate against tenants on the grounds of race, religious beliefs, colour, sex, marital status, age, ancestry, place of origin, physical characteristics, or source of income as long as it is from a lawful source.

To find out more details check out the **Tip Sheet** at www.gov.ab.ca/gs



Safety

Living on your own **safely** is an important issue. There are several tips to check out, and look to your local RCMP detachment for more information.

- ✓ Do not indicate your full name or whether or not you live alone on your mailbox or voice mail.
- ✓ Get a buddy system; let someone know where you are going and with whom. Have them call you to make sure you get home safely.
- ✓ Using a buddy system is especially important when going out to party. Get informed about 'date-rape drugs', like Rohypnol, Ecstasy and Alcohol.
- ✓ Do not hide a key outside your place (like under the mat or over the door). Do not circulate keys to your apartment, and make sure your apartment has a one-inch deadbolt and a peep-hole. Do not open the door to a stranger. Have service or delivery people show you identification first.
- ✓ Have a working smoke detector in your place. A fire extinguisher is a great idea.
- ✓ Prepare an emergency fund of money in case you get stranded and need to take a cab home over a long distance. Always carry telephone change.
- ✓ Never "buzz someone in" to your building even if they claim to have left or lost their keys. Let them contact the building manager. As well, do not hold the door open for another person, even if they appear to be holding a key ready, in case they are not a resident of the building.
- ✓ Do not enter or stay on an elevator if you are uncomfortable; wait for the next one. If someone near you makes you uncomfortable – stand up straight and look at them. Note their physical characteristics.
- ✓ List only your first initial, and omit your address in the telephone book.
- ✓ Stay aware of your surroundings; be alert when walking especially at night or when near darkened doorways and alleys.
- ✓ Know where the emergency services are in your neighborhood.
- ✓ Have someone walk with you to your door or vehicle at night. Even if it is a short distance or reasonably well lit, don't chance it.



- ✓ If you receive an obscene phone call, do not respond. Look in your local telephone book for the correct procedure. If you must perform a call trace, you have to do it immediately after the obscene call. If you receive a wrong number, do not disclose any information to the caller. Do not disclose any personal information to sales' calls or surveyors over the telephone. Do not let callers know that you are home alone.
- ✓ Always lock and secure sliding windows – particularly balcony doors.
- ✓ Have your keys ready when approaching your car or home. Get in quickly and lock doors at all times.
- ✓ Don't give out your real name, or identifying information on the Internet. If you ever want to meet someone you have met online, take someone you trust (and who will look out for you) with you.

It is important to be cautious when developing online relationships. Never give personal information such as your address, password, full name or photograph, to people that you meet online. Remember that not all people are who they seem on the Internet. Also ensure that you learn and adhere to the etiquette of the Internet and the acceptable-use policies of your school or Internet access provider. Did you know that some people have lost their Internet privileges just for sending a chain E-mail? (Adapted from the Government of Alberta)
